

# It Takes All Kinds Issue 3



Dear Reader,

I debated whether or not I was going to write anything about the “lateness” of this issue. I guess I’m not obligated to make any explanations, but I really wanted this issue out at the beginning of the month, and obviously...it’s not. The month of July has been a rough one for me and my family. I’ll spare you the details, but the one event that was the worst was the death of my grandfather, Don Blonigen, Sr.

This zine was put on the back burner for a while.

I lost the file for this issue and had to start over.

Also, since the last issue, I’ve gotten the website at [www.bravegirlstudio.net](http://www.bravegirlstudio.net) up and looking pretty decent. I’m hoping to start publishing some of print content on the web as a bit of a sample. Other plans in the works include a subscription option so you can pay once and enjoy four issues of ITAK.

Finally, I want to plug the latest contribution to the zine world: The ZineWiki! Alan Lastufka of The Fall of Autumn, along with others, launched the beginnings of what could be the definitive resource for zines, zine culture, and zinester info. More info at <http://zinewiki.com>.

So, that’s about all I have. Enjoy the stories and poems this issue, as well as the awesome comics and art. If you want to get in on the fun, see the end of the bio section. If you want past issues (useful if you want to read the other installments of “The Book of Coffee”), you can get ordering info on the back page, or at the website [www.bravegirlstudio.net](http://www.bravegirlstudio.net). See you in October.

**Misty**

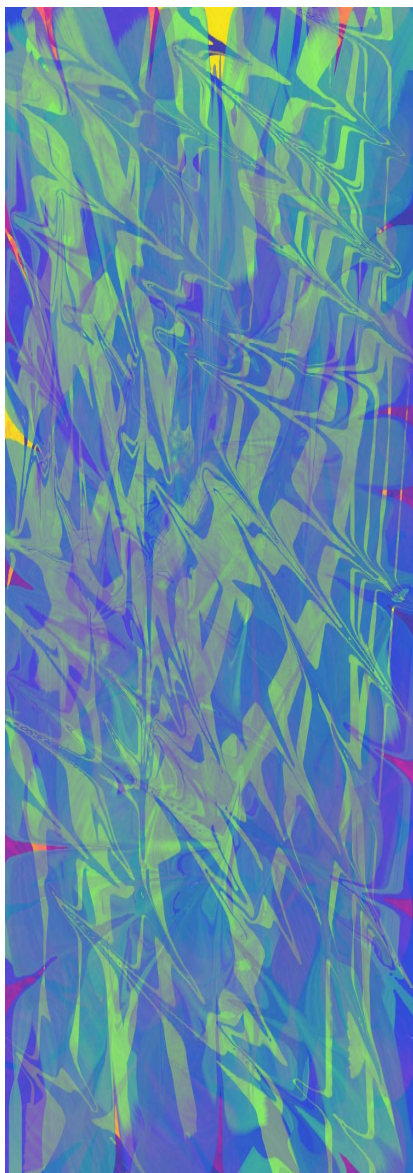
One by Rick Silva

I've never called it precious  
You, my love, you are precious to me  
The ring?  
I'm surprised it's lasted this long  
Bright plastic-blue jade,  
Chipped...  
Dropped on the bathroom tile  
One hurried morning  
Students ask unbelieving  
"Hey, mistuh... That really you wedding ring?"  
"It true you got that outa a quarter machine?"  
Sometimes I just tell them yes.  
Popped a quarter in the machine coming out of Walmart  
And headed straight for the wedding church.  
But the real story  
The one with the East Village street vendor  
That's a good story too.  
And having a story,  
That's the first step on the path to enchantment  
For now, though,  
It's you who's enchanted me.  
And if the ring falls into some sidewalk crack of doom,  
I'll go write myself a new story,  
Find myself a new ring...  
And ask you to be my forever love  
All over again.

I See... By Steve Green

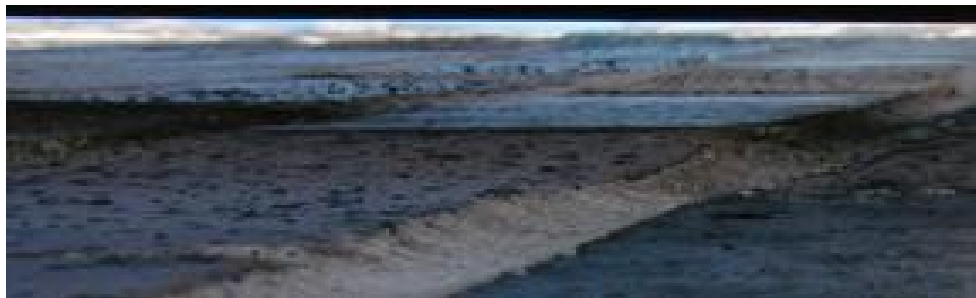
All of time in a teardrop  
All of love in a lie  
All of hope in a heartstop  
All success in a sigh  
  
All of hate in a handshake  
All of pain in a cry  
All of night in a heartbreak  
All of life when I die

[with Ann]



Web by Misty O'Brien

Brick Wall by Misty O'Brien



I wait for the day....

by Matt Eichler

when work will get every employee a living wage,  
and everyone can have a warm bed.  
when farmers and consumers know the true effects of genetically modified organisms,  
and all can have enough to eat.  
when the people know there is life beyond consumerism,  
and all can have what they need.  
when the masses understand they are being conned by the neo-cons in charge,  
and begin to question American Imperialism.  
when all the mothers of dead soldiers will rise up,  
and tell the government this war is wrong.  
when all the fathers of dead soldiers will speak,  
and realize that violence in any form hurts.  
when money doesn't buy political office or favors from the government,  
and all people can have a say.

when "The American People" means every kind and color of people in the United States,  
and English is just one language spoken here.  
when our teenagers can know they are loved and free and beautiful,  
and not have to worry about carrying an M-16.  
when women can speak and be heard,  
and men can dance in joy.  
when no one is killed because of who they are and who they love,  
and no kid is called "faggot" in school.  
when people can see their televisions and video games as opium,  
and begin to think and talk on their own.  
when people dare to read books, old and new,  
and share them with one another.  
when people realize that having is not the same as being,  
and slow down to see the trees.  
when we truly consider how we hurt this earth and her creatures,  
and then we truly consider how to build community.  
when girls don't have to wear next-to-nothing,  
and boys don't have to learn how to fight, just because "everyone else does".  
when men will talk about pain and feelings,  
and women can talk about solidarity the world over.  
when all can feel important and blessed,  
and all can look at one another and smile.  
I wait for that day.



Visit us on the web at: <http://www.labarc.com/snails>

You, You, You

by Quinn Collard

It's not fair to suck me back in and  
then slap me in the face.  
She already knows you love her  
You didn't have to tell her right in  
front of me  
You didn't have to shatter my psyche  
and rip my soul  
AGAIN  
With only my bad poetry and my  
razors to console me  
My skin sliced open like an overripe  
pear  
Every rolling ball of blood  
A love letter to you...

Untitled By Ariel Lee

It's a book. It doesn't really matter what book it is, I just want it to go away. I want it out of my bedroom, out of my house, out of my life and I don't ever want to see it again. It's orange with a black and white picture of the author on the front. I haven't read it, I refuse to read it, but it's been severely abused since you let me borrow it. Maybe from my urge to tear you apart, I've simply torn apart your book. What other details matter? It's heavy. It's a heavy book, you gave me a heavy book. And I carry it around, even though I refuse to read it. And it matters that when I was sitting in Miranda Stern's bedroom, on the day she was expelled for smoking pot, the girl you kissed and broke and neglected and made insecure, she saw it. She saw it's stupid corner poking out of my bag and asked me where I'd gotten it. She knew where when I didn't say anything, the same way I knew where the Gary Snyder that my best friend carried around came from. It's a book, and I left it my best friend's purse on the night I moved away. I knew it'd get back to you that way, and I couldn't imagine packing it. It was too heavy. And I couldn't imagine leaving it here in this house because I would never be able to think about anything but the fact that it was in my house. So I put it in her purse at three o'clock in the morning, she was good and asleep. When she hugged me goodbye and made me cry one of the many things I told her was, make sure he gets my book. I want him to get it back and I don't want it in my house. It's too thick. On the other hand, my beautiful Russel Edson book with his art inside of it, the one I bought for fifteen dollars and threw at you one day, I want you to keep it. I hope you kept it. And I hope that the last time I ran into you by chance you already had your book back, and you already knew you were keeping mine, though that's impossible. I want you to keep my book and I want everyone who walks into your bedroom to see it, laying next to your Gary Snyder and Leaves of Grass.

exeunt omnes

by Steve Green

watch:  
the actor is walking in light  
golden as his memories

he pauses  
lights a cigarette  
then continues

he is the drama  
this is the final act  
before an audience of one

listen:  
the actor is speaking  
lines which were written for him

"my life," he says  
gesturing towards the darkness  
"and all the lies that formed it"

his is the song-cry  
the primal scream  
of the silent majority

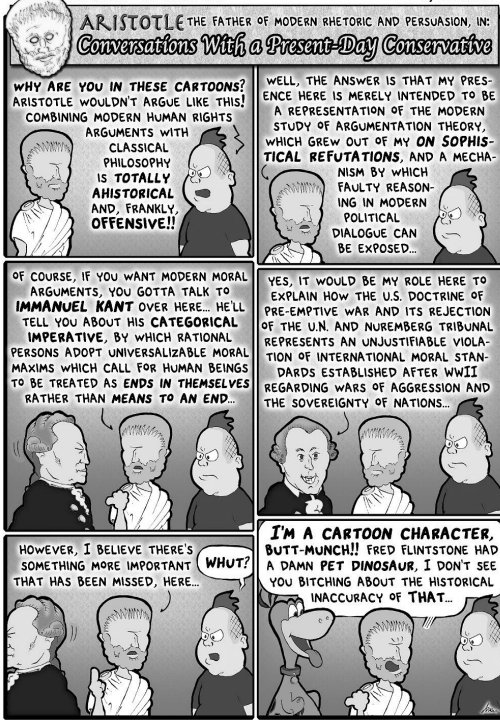
applaud:  
the actor is crying  
in tribute to wasted opportunities

"i thought," he says  
as the curtain falls  
"therefore i might have been"

rise for the ovation  
as the actor makes his final exit  
leaving the stage empty  
for you

## FIGHTING WORDS

by Ben Smith



"Fuck you," I mumbled, rubbing my forehead as I struggled to sit up.

"Hey! She can hear us!" the other one announced.

I blinked, and the two came into focus. One male was built like Chris Farley, wore tattered jeans and a backwards baseball cap, and appeared as if he hadn't shaved in a day or two, while the other bore an uncanny resemblance to what Bug-Eyed Earl from the Red Meat comic strip must've looked like during his younger years.

"Who the fuck are you guys?" I demanded.

The fat one spoke. "I'm Big Party Dude, Class of '73, and this is my partner in crime, Flip McNeely, always ready to feel ye." He broke into laughter.

"Well, stay the hell away from me."

"No, we can't! You're the first person who has been able to see us in over thirty years! You have to help us!"

"What the hell are you talking about?"

"Me and Flip are ghosts. We used to be the big partiers

Collard

here on campus. We lived in this dorm the whole time we were here. It had just been built and was originally a freshman dorm, but nobody every wanted to leave 'cause it was the PARTY PLACE! PARRRRR-TYYYY! WOooo!"

"Could you please shut the fuck up, Frattie? My head hurts."

"Sorry, babe. Anyway, one night I died from drinking too much beer. YEAH, BEER! WOoooo! And Flip here went on a bad acid trip and took a jump out a window on the eighth floor. We can't rest until we finish the awesome party we started, and you have to help us!"

I figured that they wouldn't go away until I politely offered my assistance. "Alright, sure, I'll help." Every time I spoke to them after that point, my thoughts were broadcasted with a lot of reverb. It was just like a bad '80s movie.

"Just call me Big Party Dude, Class of '73! See, Flip, I told you this chick was cool."

"Wow, thanks for calling me cool! Do you mind if I just refer to you as 'BPD73' from now on?" (Up yours, you useless pricks.)

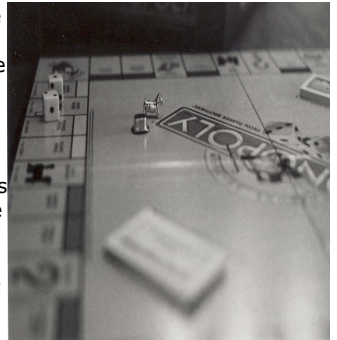
It was just like a bad '80s movie.

By Brianne Fidgety

I was eighteen again and starting college. Though I lived in a dorm across campus, I found myself spending a lot of time in the Nerd Dorm. It was filled with a lot of computer geeks who all seemed to have a penchant for wearing nothing but black clothing. However, they were nice and liked cool music, so I enjoyed their collective company. Unfortunately, the building was slowly being overrun with Gs. The latter listened to horrible rap music very loudly, always seemed to be drunkenly loitering in the hall, and generally being obnoxious. They gave the Nerds a hard time, especially whenever they were DDRing in the DDR Room, which was a glass enclosure situated the middle of the courtyard.

Though I wasn't very good at DDRing, I liked the DDR Room because it was lined with Icee machines of every flavour and juice dispensers containing liquid squeezed from the most tropical of fruits. I stole away under the cover of darkness one night to stock up on mango and pineapple juice when some G came out of nowhere and threw something at my head.

When I came to, I saw the hazy outline of two figures. "Whoa, look! She's got big tits!" the fatter one exclaimed.



A Game by Quinn

"Uh, why? What does that mean?"

"Big Party Dude, Class of '73. It's just easier that way." (*You're so fucking dumb.*)

"Dude! You're a total *genius!*"

"Yeah, genius. Heh, imagine that." (*I WANT TO KILL YOU NOW! TOO BAD YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD!*)

I spent the next two weeks doing everything those ghostly jackasses asked of me short of showing them my boobs. My efforts were tireless; I found a place to hold a large gathering, hung fliers all over campus, purchased the *right* kind of ice, and hired some strippers. The whole time I did this, it was a huge montage scene with Duran Duran's "The Reflex" playing. Again, it was just like a bad '80s movie.

The night of the party finally arrived, but a sudden blizzard had manifested and the roads were nearly impassable. Unfortunately, I was unable to get beer. They were undaunted, however, and disappeared then shortly rematerialized with a copious amount of booze. "How did you do that?!" (*Great job there.*) I asked excitedly. "Oh, we're ghosts, so we can teleport and shit."

An hour after the festivities were set to start, the house was still empty. The ghosts panicked, and I had to convince them to calm down. Suddenly, "(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party)" by the Beastie Boys started blasting from nowhere, and all these people just showed up. I mean, a ton of cars pulled into the lawn at once and a few guests even arrived via hot air balloon. There were Gs, nerds, hicks, punks, and straight-laced professors, and they could all see Big Party Dude, Class of '73 and Flip McNeely. BPD73 and Flip were so ecstatic that they declared me Keg Queen, but I talked them out of making me do keg stands.

Everybody started to leave once the sun came up. I was sitting in a corner when I heard "Well, I guess this is goodbye, baby," over my head. I looked up to see BPD73 and Flip hovering within a brilliant, golden light. For some odd reason "(Don't You) Forget About Me" by Simple Minds hung on the air, even though I had recently shut off the stereo. Once more, it was just like a bad '80s movie.

"We wanna thank you for all you've done for us, Hot Chick. Without you, we wouldn't be going to the big party in the sky. IT'S GONNA BE THE ULTIMATE PARTY! WOOWOOOO!"

"No problem, Big Party Dude, Class of '73. You two take care of yourselves. I'll miss you." (*Rot in Hell, fuckos.*)

"Hey, maybe we'll get to party with you again someday! We'll be waiting!"

"Yeah, me to." (*I'm sure I'll be seeing you fuckwits in Hell. Oh boy.*)

"Goodbye, and thanks!" they called as they became one with the illumination.

I just shook my head and walked away as the credits began to roll.

## Leftovers



Leftovers by Sarah Morean

Zephyr and Reginald: Minions For Hire

by Gynn Stella and Rick Silva



www.dandelionstudios.com

## DANGEROUS LEE ASKS...

I recently shot a music video for local rap artist, Theory. The shoot was for a concert scene. I had no idea what to wear, but I wanted to be cute like all the other chicks that appear in music videos. This wasn't a "Drop it Like it's Hot" music video shoot (Theory is a female), but I felt the need to be sexy anyway even though I can't even drop it like it's warm. I just wanted to be cute on camera. I felt the pressure!

I tried on a million different outfits and the one that stood out was this cute li'l military inspired dress I got from Victoria's Secret. I was fine blending in with the crowd, but everyone insisted that I stand out and wanted me to dance more. Hello, I don't dance! No one believes this, but I don't. I'm very laid back. The only time I dance is when I am at home with my daughter actin' silly!

And, just as I am writing this article, some knucklehead approaches me on MySpace under the name of Bella! Agency and asks me what I charge to appear in videos! If he had taken the time he would have realized that I am not like the other women on his page with their bare asses out! I am a writer!

I wouldn't mind being in a music video as you've obviously read above, but if I do, I have to be me, not a scantily clad poppin' and lockin' piece of eye candy! This Bella! Agency person continued to approach me in a very nice but unprofessional manor. "Send me a few pics and you'll start making money" is what I was told. Hello, where are your credentials, the contract, the company website? I'm not fallin' for the okie doke! Be careful ladies, the freaks are not limited to night outings!

Anyway, I bring this up to get on the topic of Video Hoes, no not Video Vixens, there's a difference. I'm talking about Videos Hoes! The chicks who appear in the UnCut videos on BET past midnight doing everything except having actual intercourse!

How did hip hop videos get where they are today and what's the deal with Video Hoes anyway? And, why is no one concerned with those Girls Gone Wild chicks. They're pretty risqué and cheap too, aren't they? I posed this question to my MySpace friends and the opinions varied. Here are a few:

Crell says..."The majority of the Girls Gone Wild women are White, while the majority of so called video hoers are women of color. White women have a large array of media images with a large percentage being that of a dignified nature. Women of color, on the other hand, have less of a range. Throughout the history of film, TV, and print media, sisters have been consistently shown in the light of being promiscuous and available for the taking."

Berton says..."I think rap music is being marketed as the Black cultural experience, which pigeonholes Black women. Girls Gone Wild videos are marketed as porn and is expected to be sexual. Music videos are marketed as true life visuals of Black culture."

Jim Neusom..."Most of the professional models and dancers I've met are smart, aggressive, professional, beautiful women, with agents, lawyers, and boyfriends/husbands setting in the wings. They are no joke. Now I'm not saying things don't happen. But as they say; a fool and his money are soon parted. Ask Mike Tyson, Rick James, or R. Kelly."

I believe that Crell and Berton have both hit the nail on the head as to why

many in the Black community as well as Oprah are upset with rappers and the hip hop community in general. What Jim speaks of are the Video Vixens and other professional woman in the business. There is a difference between the two and what Video Hoes do for music videos is the same thing that strippers who have sex for money do for the stripper world; degrade it. Not all women who appear in videos are hoers just like not all Black people can dance!

I've been informed that the footage we shot for Theory's music video that day may end up on the cutting room floor! Oh well, so much for my Victoria's Secret dress. Check out Theory at [www.myspace.com/theorymuzik](http://www.myspace.com/theorymuzik) and subscribe to Video Vixens Magazine at [www.videovixens.net](http://www.videovixens.net)—yes, they have their own magazine! Discuss this with me at my MySpace page by clicking on the "Video Hoes-vs-Girls Gone Wild" Blog.

### Education Dangerous Lee Style

AXE, the makers of the body spray that supposedly drives women crazy have an opportunity open to Black filmmakers. It's going to be an annual series "To elevate aspiring Black filmmakers into the national spotlight."

I posted this information on MySpace to the creative masses and I got a couple of responses that really pissed me off. One was an attempt at comedy asking if they painted themselves Black, would they qualify!

My response was, "Was that supposed to be a joke?" Their response was "It was, you'd have to hang out with me more to get it. That's okay."

What exactly is okay? The fact that you made a dumbass comment and I didn't think it was funny?

I mean c'mon people, when is it okay to make reference to being made up in blackface? That's not something you should ever joke about with a Black person. I don't care how "down" you think you are and I definitely don't want to hang with your ass to get a better idea of how ignorant you are! I mean, have you ever heard of anyone trying to pass as Black to get ahead?

The second silly-ass response I got was from a guy who was once engaged to a sista who felt that the opportunity AXE was offering was biased and unfair. I told him "Welcome to my world." He continued to inform me that he knew what it was like in my world because when he was engaged to a Black woman, he and she were discriminated against, and he hoped I could see it from his side. Hello! I am a Black woman; I don't need to see it from your side.

Here's the deal: Opportunities such as the one that AXE has offered are not the same as "Whites Only" drinking fountains and segregation.

These opportunities exist because, and I'll say this again for the hundredth time, African-Americans are often ignored and not given the same opportunities as their White counterparts. Period. Read your history. Read African-American history. Learn something and stop feeling like you're being denied access to extra credit opportunities. You

will always be the chosen one. I see why the sista stepped out on you.

Furthermore, the world is multi-flavored, not just vanilla. AXE knows the value of reaching out to all demographics. They want brothas to wear their overrated man scent too!

### Is Plastic Surgery Necessary?

I understand why everyone in Hollywood finds it necessary to get some form of plastic surgery. It's simple; everyone has issues with their bodies. Yes, even moi! I can go from head to toe on what I don't like about my body. The difference is that I don't have the cash to make myself look like a cracked out version of my current self. If I had the cash I wouldn't go under the knife. No thanks! I want to remain human looking. I am not from Venus.

Celebs, bless their hearts, have it extra hard because we look at their narrow and fat asses on television, the big screen, magazines and the internet at all times of the day! That's pressure! And of course they must look good for us. Would we adore them if they were normal looking and had visible flaws? I doubt it. We have to have something to aspire to, right?

I imagine plastic surgeons in Hollywood lying naked in piles of money dying from laughter at the lil' famous monsters that they create. Take a good look at the after images of some of these people. They look a mess! Downright scary! I thought plastic surgery was all about looking youthful and fresh, not about creating rail-thin zombies with alien heads, big breasts and duck lips. What we need to do is get our damn teeth cleaned and straightened. A new set of teeth can create a new you!

My advice for the regular Joe is: A lil' work goes a long way. Most celebs that get work done don't need any. Plastic surgery is for the downright ugly and deformed as far as I'm concerned. Just say no!

That's it; we need to start a Just Say No to Plastic Surgery campaign. First we need to get the Don't Eat At All Diet under control. The next time you see a rail-thin person who claims they're not anorexic or bulimic, trust me, they're on this diet.

**Ask Dangerous Lee** by Dangerous Lee

**Q:** Why do we go to the club in hopes of meeting someone and then when someone approaches us, we diss them, secretly knowing we love every minute of their attention? —April, Washington DC

**A:** The problem is that we as women want the sexy guys to approach us and they don't. Only the knuckleheads have the balls to approach us. The fine fellas are too busy fixing their hair and clothes waiting for us to approach them. This is one reason why you won't find me in da club!

**Q:** Why do nice guys finish last? Why do I have to have a bad boy persona to be with someone, can't I just be myself and treat someone how I want to be treated? —Dats Jus Swift, Alexandria

**A:** You may be unattractive or a knucklehead like the fellas I mentioned in the above answer.

**Q:** Why are there non-skid paperclips? Did paperclip skidding really used to be such a huge problem, or did someone have too much free time? —Lo, Flint

**A:** Yes, someone did have too much time on their hands, just like you!

**Q:** What constitutes a sellout to you? I'm so tired of Black people calling other Black people who become successful sellouts! What the hell? Damn, Black people, my people, I hate you most for trying to kill off each other. And you wonder why we will always be seen as buffoons and jackasses? —CB, New York City

**A:** For me a sell out is anyone that denies their heritage or tries to be something that they're not! As far as Black people tearing each other down, read last month's column. This subject wears me out. The crab in the bucket mentality is killing us.

**Q:** Is it gay if a guy gets bit on the ass by a rattlesnake, and one of his boys sucks out the poison? —Huey Freeman, Inglewood

**A:** Yes, and the rattlesnake is gay too!

**Q:** Cat-o-Nine Tails or Riding Crop? Warm Leatherette or Cool Satin? Chains or Silk Scarves? —Madam Frostbite, Detroit

**A:** Simple hand-to-ass is kinky enough for me!

**Q:** How come niggas get mad when you date or are seen with a white chic but love it when you follow that thang through the mall, skeet skeet skeet, or shake the laffy taffy of a black chic? Is that niggerish? —

Aubrey, Chicago

**A:** Wow! Let me see if I can follow you on this one. I don't understand your language. I think you're saying that Black folks don't have a problem acting a damn fool with each other, but do have a problem throwing someone White in the mix. If so, duh!

**Q:** Are you free? —Brig Feltus, Los Angeles

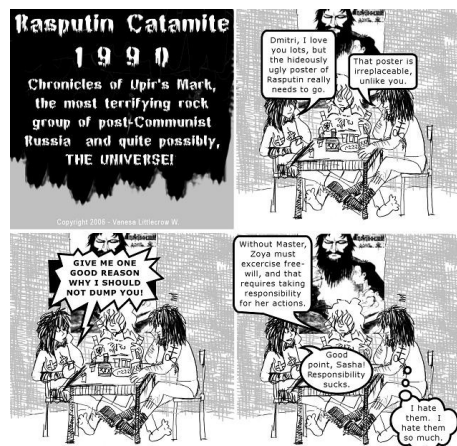
**A:** No, I've been appraised and I cost between 1 and 3 million dollars! I'll be up for bid soon eBay style.

**Q:** What do you think is the difference in a man and a boy? —Arlando, Presque Isle

**A:** Body hair is the only difference. The rest of them remain the same.

**Q:** Why do psychics advertise? —Evert, Los Angeles

**A:** They predict a bunch of dumbasses calling!



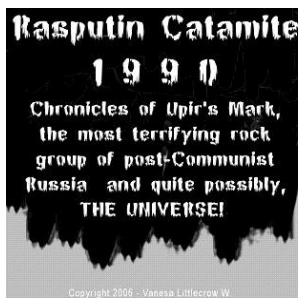
Onset By Rick Silva

The breeze stalls the gulls in flight  
So that they hang near motionless  
Few are adorned in the pure white  
Of the postcard pictures, rather  
They sport the speckled browns  
Of mildewed cottage shingles,  
Planks, pilings and the park benches  
Placed on Onset bluffs overlooking  
Boats and beach, overhearing the  
Revelry of the kids just out of school  
Overlooking sand and signs of the salt  
Water taffy stand still awaiting the  
Summer rush, the crowds like breezes  
That will stall the seagulls, throwing  
Their tasty refuse, overlooking all

But air and summer sun

**SAFEST OF ALL** by Brett Yates

The silky, orange sunlight of a June evening caressed Percy Munroe's car as its driver made his way home through the suburban streets. What a sight! Percy considered the catlike sleekness it surely impressed upon any observers on the sidewalk. Certainly they—why weren't more people out walking on this beautiful day?—admired the way it blanketed the road and then glided over it so smoothly, like a shiny bowling ball coasting down an alley's polished wood on its way to a strike. Percy drove it with the firm but loving hand of a pro. These thoughts about his car cheered him a little. He'd had a lousy day at the office. It had been the kind of day in which nothing in particular had gone wrong, but every minute had carried a minor agitation that, when added to every previous minute's agitation, formed in Percy an unbearable itch to escape. His coworker, Ryan, who occupied the desk next to his, had all day hummed a tune that Percy was sure he knew but couldn't place due to Ryan's off-key performance. Percy had considered asking Ryan to stop but thought that he would, by doing so, come across as a thin-skinned quibbler who needed to mind his



own business. He didn't want to make any enemies at the workplace, an already unpleasant environment. But that job had bought Percy his car. And it was a BMW! It made the commute to his job a joy, even if the job itself wasn't. He couldn't say the name without grinning. Exactly a month after Percy had turned ten years old, his best friend Ronnie had announced that his father had bought one. Ronnie's dad took them both kids for a ride that day; the car's elegant design and luxurious smell made a strong impression upon young Percy, who was filled with jealousy, as his own father drove a dented Volkswagen. There had been to Percy something exquisite in carrying out this juvenile wish. So few of his dreams from childhood had come to fruition: He wasn't a cowboy, a pirate, or an astronaut. At least one of his old goals had deserved preservation into adulthood. He had sacrificed the rest to mature prudence. It had

been a sacrifice to accept the job at which he'd now worked for two years. Even his marriage had meant a sacrifice of the hope of the perfect wife; certainly, he thought, accepting him had for Jacqueline carried a sacrifice larger than his, for she was, despite her flaws, a better person than he. Percy made a left onto Pequot Drive, where he lived. A hundred yards away lay his home, his marriage, his compromise. Now even his car seemed an insufficient defense against his life. He sighed. Adjacent to a house three lots up the street from Percy's, a cardboard box sat in the road, near the left side of the pavement. It looked as though it had once held a large television. Probably the wind had pushed it from the curb, where it had awaited recycling. Percy considered giving it a hit with his car; he could knock it a few yards down the asphalt to relieve a bit of his stress. But, at the last second, he considered how silly he would look to any neighbors who might be watching, and he turned his

steering wheel to the right to avoid the box.

A moment later, he pulled up onto his driveway and exited his automobile. He turned around to survey his block, and it seemed that not even the late sun of early summer could lend its suburban blandness any beauty. And then, in the corner of his eye, he saw the cardboard box lift up; he shifted his gaze to it, and two cheerful boys, no older than eight, came out. Percy's heart jumped. He rushed inside.

"Jacqueline! You won't believe what happened—or, I mean, what didn't happen or what could've happened."

Jacqueline was watching TV, but she paused to roll her eyes. "A lot of things don't happen, and a lot of things could happen."

"No," said Percy. "This really was terrifying. Up the street, by the Skinners' house, there was a cardboard box in the street. It looked empty, and I thought about just knocking it out of the way with my car instead of swerving to avoid it, but at the last moment, I decided not to. And then, a second later, these two kids come out from under there. They were playing in there or something, like it was a tiny fort or clubhouse—or a hiding spot. Maybe they were in a game of hide-and-go-seek. I don't know. But I could've killed them. I was this close to running them both over."

"Their parents must be crazy to let them play in the street," said Jacqueline. "I picked up pizza just a few minutes ago. It's in the kitchen. Let's eat."

"Wait: I mean, I could've been a murderer," said Percy. "Me. That's what I would've been. Right? Just like that—those two kids, dead. What could I have said to their families? What would've happened to me?"

"It's no use worrying about it," said Jacqueline. "You didn't do anything. The kids are fine."

"But I could've killed them."

"Was it the Thorps' two boys?"

"No, I didn't recognize them. But it was just awful."

"OK. Well, let's just forget about it and go eat."

"That's all right. I'm not hungry.

You eat. I couldn't tonight. Sorry."

"You're not having any dinner?"

"No, I don't think so."

Jacqueline shrugged. "OK."

Percy's next day at the office was even worse than the previous one. He'd spent the night without sleep, thinking about the two boys, and he trudged through work bleary-eyed. Ryan hummed the same tune. At five o'clock, he was happy to head out to the parking lot. Home and perhaps even some sleep awaited him.

As he approached his car, which he had parked at the other end of the lot, he noticed someone lingering near it. The diminutive, black-haired stranger appeared to be merely standing there, shifting from one foot to the other, but he roused a suspicion in Percy. What was his reason for standing there, next to Percy's car? Percy walked faster than usual.

And then he saw it: a small, metallic object in the stranger's hand. The stranger pressed it against the front door of the car and made a horizontal swipe with his arm all the way to the rear door. Percy was running. The stranger heard footsteps and turned his head. For a moment, his frightened gaze met Percy's frantic one, but the runner's focus quickly turned back to the car. A second later, he was there, and one glance confirmed his fear: The stranger had keyed his car. He turned to face the perpetrator, who appeared frozen in terror.

What surprised Percy about the villain was his age.

Keying cars in parking lots was, to Percy's knowledge, an activity for delinquent youths. Yet this man was far older than he—fifty, perhaps. But Percy had heard of the dangers of

owning a luxury automobile in a world of jealous miscreants. The geriatric wore dirty, torn clothing that indicated extreme poverty or even homelessness, and Percy instantly assumed that envy of the apparent wealth of the car's owner had served as motivation for the crime. Percy stared into the stranger's weary, scared eyes. "You didn't have to do this," said Percy.

The evildoer did not reply.

"I'm not even rich," said Percy. "I just drive a rich person's car. You've chosen the wrong victim."

"I'm sorry," said the villain.

"I should call the police. I should kill you. I should."

"I'm sorry."

The man looked too pathetic.

The pockmarks on his cheeks seemed the result of the erosion of skin by the

ceaseless, incoming tide of disappointment. The wrinkles on his brow exuded misery.

He reminded Percy a bit of his father. He couldn't punish him for his desperate, futile try to fight against the order of things. There was something slightly noble about an attempt to swim against the current, even if the attempt took the form of juvenile vandalism.

Percy sighed. "OK. Get out of here. I won't call the police if you just get out of here."

The man turned and ran.

Percy inspected the scratch on his car. It was deep and visible -- a white streak in the black paint. He felt as though a schoolyard bully had just given his son a black eye. He didn't have any kids yet, but he loved his car almost like a son. He could still drive it. The mark was nothing -- a flesh wound. He could get it fixed. But even then, he'd be able to picture the scratch, and that side of the car would never in his mind be the same. The whole car would never be the same.

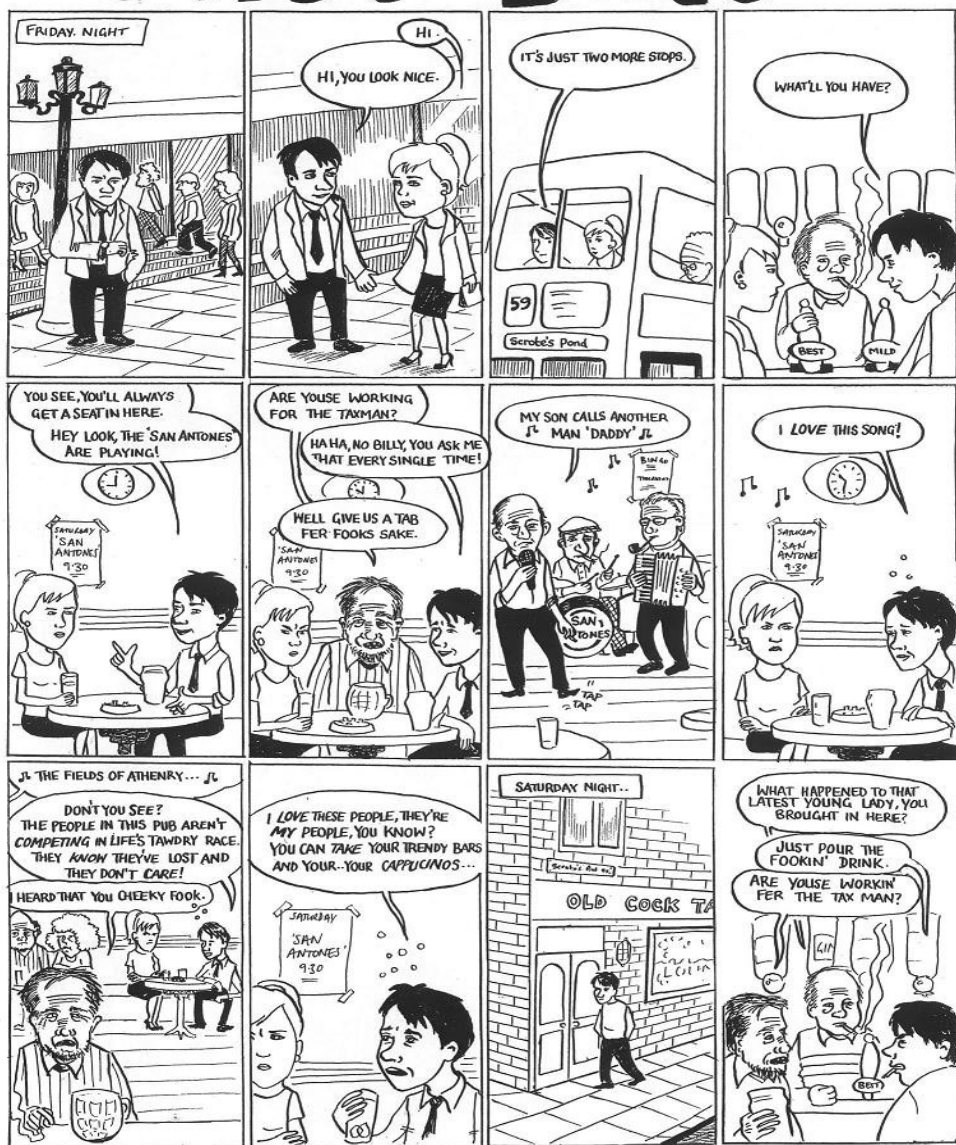
The scratch had evicted the two children he had nearly

killed from his mind. Even as he became aware of the replacement and the shameful swiftness of it, he couldn't bring himself to focus on the kids now. Again and again, the scratch rose to the top: his dream, knifed down the middle. He didn't care about the two boys now. He got into the car and began to drive home.

But by the time he neared his house, the shock of the whole incident had worn off, and he found he didn't care about the car either. He could no longer love it; damaged, it could no longer protect him. It reminded Percy of all the other dreams that reality had

destroyed. He could run over all the children in the world and let his car receive the sharp end of every key; he'd disowned both victims. When he had parked on his driveway, he left the car and went inside to greet his wife.

# First Date



### Inertia Extinguisher

by Brianne Fidgety

You're right on time

To watch the fragile existence

I've cultivated from amber fiction

And B-Movies that play only on

Disused drive-in screens

Come unbound in an anguished explosion

Of a million megaton blast of potential energy.

Ghosts visit me in the night

When I used to be awake.

They leave notes detailing what to bring

On an excursion into the Shifting Forest.

I want to see my isotopes on fire,

Twisting strands of DNA around my neck,

Forcing my breath to a place where it should be by now.

I will dance with Vishnu on a cold night

Under a harvest moon.

My pen will cause earthquakes on every undefiled surface it touches

Surefooted and steady, I will be born

Into the waters of fulfillment.



Rainbow Horizon by Misty O'Brien

### Imperial Beach by Quinn Collard

By the time she ran onto

the beach the egg yolk

sun was already slithering

all quiet on the western sky

but still glowing dandelion

and orange. The ridges of

water were pulling back

and dropping themselves and

the mountains behind were guarded

by a lifeless full moon. Thoughts

only of mind snapshots to be

carefully filed and tall phantom

men who might not be far away.

She passed pier walkers tallying

evening's fishing and watched the

warmness drain from the sky. Kids

scuffled in the sand. She gave up

on deciding if the melting lights

across the water were San Diego

or Mexico. By now even the surfers have put their shoes on and gone to bed. No one

shares the beach with the gulls but sandy nuzzling couples and the would-be suicide.



Imperial Beach by Quinn Collard



Untitled by Ariel Lee

The dim apartment smelt yellow and glowed yellow. It was sparse and food was rotting in the refrigerator. The venetian blinds were crooked, no trace of the steady parallel light rays that this sort of blind promised. Those large

square hands held the flesh of the hips of that young man, a kite and an apron from which a book was falling sat on the kitchen table, one leg had a dictionary under it to keep the table from wobbling. There were thrusts and grunts and soon the young man's pants were pulled back up to his waist and secured with a thick leather belt. A cigarette dangled from his dry lips and bare chested he looked around for his shoes. He had already taken in the room, the old man from the coffee shop had walked down the hallway and he trailed behind, noticing the old man's awkward gait. The old man tried several keys from a large key ring before choosing the correct one. His fingers flicked the light switch and the busboy drifted around the room. The bed was made neatly, military style. The rest of the room was in shambles, mismatched dishes in the sink, a few books on the bookshelf; Frost, Whitman, Poe. The young man picked up a leather bound copy of song of myself, leafed through the pages and the old man recited the words, coming up behind him. Now the old man was making coffee. He was naked other than a pair of striped boxers over which his stomach protruded, his chest was hairy, silver. You could smell the coffee, smell the thick tar blackness of it. The boy pulled on his clothes and apron, found his shoes. "You really should quit," said the old man, gesturing towards the cigarette still dangling from the boy's mouth, growing shorter all the time. The boy smiled and nodded, said something that might have been "sure" and walked out the door. He ran his hands over the rough wallpaper in the hallway, he thought of all the questions he had meant to ask and had forgotten. He realized there was only a dead butt hanging from his mouth. He let it fall and stuck another between his lips, inhaling as he let it touch the flame in his hands. Smoke billowed from his mouth and he pulled open the heavy door and the light that barely made it's way to the old man's room now hit his eyes head on, scalding them. He squinted and took another drag, trying to remember in which direction he should go. His next shift started in twenty minutes but when he walked down to the subway he took the train heading home. The train was near empty but he stood anyway, holding onto the bar running horizontal along above his head. He didn't bother taking out his book, an old wrinkled woman sat facing him just a few feet away. He spied the tiny dragonfly barrette nestled in her hair. "You like dragonflies?" he asked her, his voice breaking into a whisper mid-way through the sentence. She looked perplexed for a moment, thinking the question had come from nothing. Finally she remembered the barrette and patted her hair. "Yes, they are beautiful." She answered and looked away. He decided not to tell her that male dragonflies find the weakest females they can who cannot fight them off, injecting her with his sperm and often making holes in her skull or eyes with his claws. He decided not to tell her that this ritual evolved over billions of years, this was their highly evolved, best and most simple way to survive. An overcrowded second-hand book store that makes her cough. The light was just bright enough that you could see dust floating in the air. She meets the eyes of the proprietor who has a thick handlebar mustache. She still has a sick feeling in her stomach, one she has been carrying around for a man she barely knows. She had woken up that morning on a friend's ragged couch, it wasn't long enough so her legs slept crooked. Her neck felt stiff and her arms lay awkwardly at her sides as she looked at the books, as if her body had no place in this setting until she began shifting through the books, sorting them. She quickly found what she wanted and paid for the thick hardback volume with a crumpled dollar bill. The man behind the counter had the remnants of a southern accent. "I've read that one," he said. "It's quite good, better than his other works, have you read anything else by him?" And she realized with a start that she hadn't even looked at the title or the author. She smiled and bit her fingers as a response and he handed her the book in a brown paper.

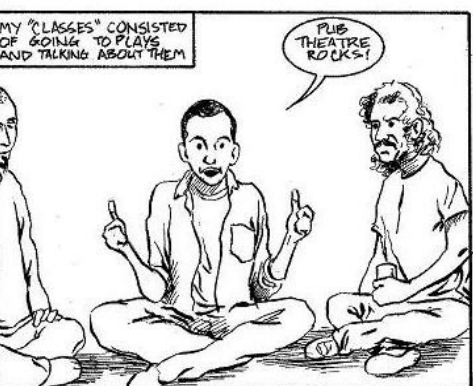
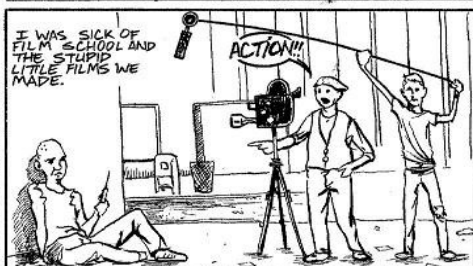


## So... She Moved In With Me Anyway.



# SO... ONLY NIXON COULD'VE GONE TO CHINA

BY: JONATHAN BAYLIS AND D. BEYER JR.



ANYWAY SPRING BREAK  
CAME IN MARCH



DO YOU  
WANNA SKIP  
AROUND EUROPE  
WITH US?

I HADN'T MADE  
ANY PLANS SO  
I FIGURED...



WHY  
NOT?



WE STARTED  
WITH AMSTERDAM

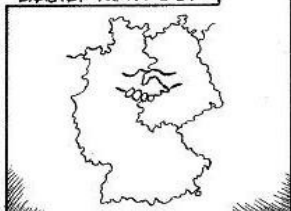
BUT SOON MADE  
OUR WAY TO...



NOW, JEW  
THAT I AM,  
GERMANY  
WAS NOT  
A PLACE I  
WAS REALLY  
LOOKING  
FORWARD  
TO.



A UNIFIED GERMANY WAS  
A NEW THING AND THE  
THOUGHT OF IT DIDN'T  
EXACTLY TURN ME ON.



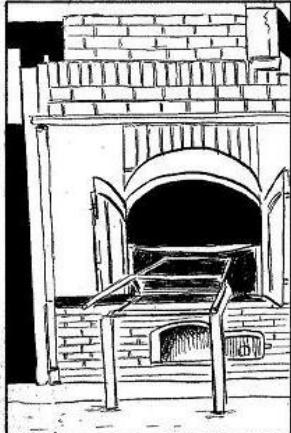
JUST UPON ENTERING THAT PLACE, I GOT  
INTO A FIGHT WITH THE  
TRAIN CONDUCTOR.

SCHREI KENN-ZET  
ANG-LEESH?

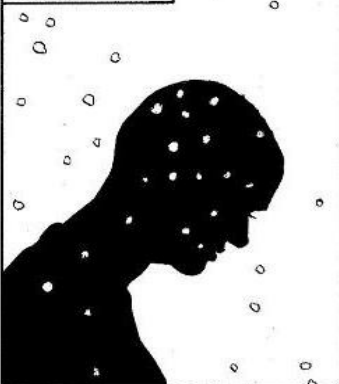


MACH SCHNELL  
SAUERKRAUT  
JUDEN  
SCHNITZEL!!

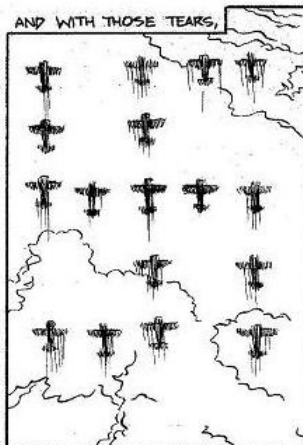
I TOOK A SIDE TRIP TO  
BACHAU, THE FIRST  
CONCENTRATION CAMP.



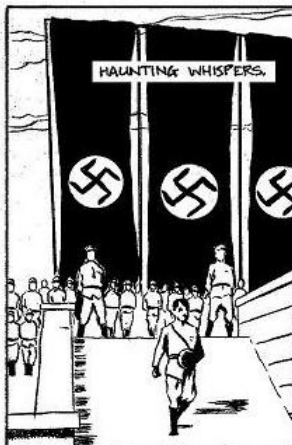
AND THEN FROZEN  
TEARS FELL FROM  
THE SKY.



AND WITH THOSE TEARS,



HAUNTING WHISPERS.



EVEN THOUGH I KNOW THE FACTS AND HAVE SEEN ALL THE MOVIES I COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT HUMAN HANDS COULD BUILD SUCH HORRORS.



BUT LET'S GET BACK TO LONDON FOR A MOMENT.



I FIGURED SINCE THERE WOULD BE LONG TRAIN RIDES BETWEEN



THAT I'D ACTUALLY BUY SOME MUSIC.

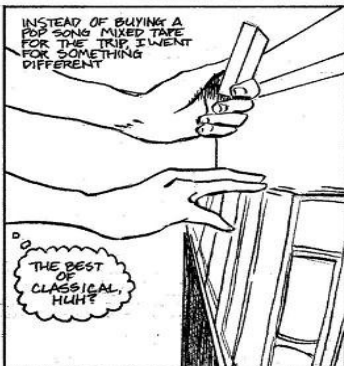


IN LONDON THEY HAD THESE GREAT MIXED TAPES FOR SALE.

IN AMERICA THE RECORD LABELS WOULD PROBABLY PREVENT SUCH MIXING BUT I GUESS THE LEGALITIES ARE DIFFERENT ABROAD.



INSTEAD OF BUYING A POP SONG MIXED TAPE FOR THE TRIP I WENT FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT



THE BEST OF CLASSICAL, HUHT



IT HAD ALL KINDS OF POPULAR PIECES ON IT LIKE BEETHOVENS 5th...

AND THE 1812 OVERTURE.



BUT THERE WAS ONE PIECE I'D NEVER HEARD OF...



FANTASIA ON A THEME BY THOMAS TALLIS?



WELL, IT TURNED OUT THAT I DIDN'T HAVE AS MUCH TIME FOR MUSIC AS I THOUGHT I WOULD. THERE WAS PLANNING AND CONVERSATION AND SLEEPING.

BUT I NEEDED  
A MOMENT OR  
FEW UPON  
LEAVING  
GERMANY.



WHERE  
I'LL NEVER  
GO BACK!



AND I FINALLY  
POPPED IN THAT  
TAPE.



AND TRIED TO  
ESCAPE FROM MY  
ESCAPE FOR  
A BIT



THIS UNRECOGNIZABLE TUNE  
CAME ON AND I FIGURED  
IT MUST'VE BEEN THAT  
FANTASIA PIECE.



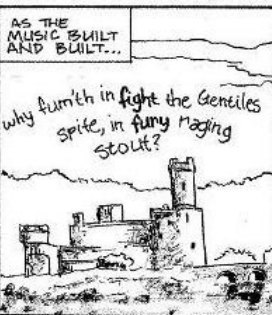
THE PIECE  
WAS  
INCREDIBLY  
MAJESTIC



I STARTED  
TO ENVISION  
CASTLES AS  
THE TRAIN  
HUSTLED  
AND I  
BUMPED  
MY HEAD.

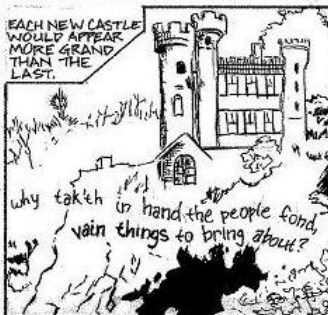


AND CASTLES  
STARTED TO  
APPEAR OUT MY  
WINDOW.



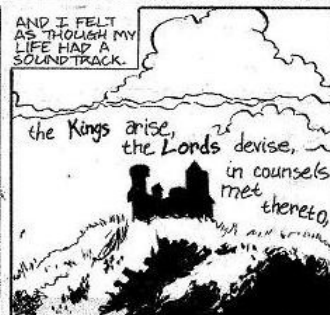
AS THE  
MUSIC BUILT  
AND BUILT...

why fum'th in fight the Gentiles  
spite, in fury raging  
stout?



EACH NEW CASTLE  
WOULD APPEAR  
MORE GRAND  
THAN THE  
LAST.

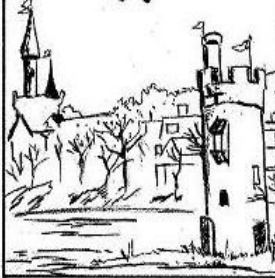
why takth in hand the people fond,  
vain things to bring about?



AND I FELT  
AS THOUGH MY  
LIFE HAD A  
SOUNDTRACK.

the Kings arise,  
the Lords devise,  
in counsels  
met thereto,

against the Lord with false  
accord, against His Lord  
they go.



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Moralities By Steve Green

later,  
at the beach:  
listening to a teevee sermon

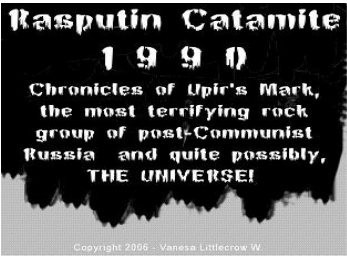
stereo skullfuck:  
the bland leading the blind  
(smile for the camera)

“brothers and sisters,  
give me your hearts,  
your minds,  
your tax-deductible donations”

screwing God:  
the one life stand  
(smile for the audience)

“deposit your souls in the celestial bank;  
who says you can’t take it with you?”

i gazed out a window  
and watched the morning surf  
wash the shore  
as clear  
as their consciences  
(fade to grey)



Cross by Misty O'Brien

**The Sacred Book of Coffee** by Loki Kaspari

[Editor's note: this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> in a series.]

Those of us who live and die by the coffee recognize this book for what it really is; a collection of funny stories which may seem vaguely blasphemous to those with no sense of humor whatsoever. We encourage such people not to read any further.

**The Book of Suggestions.**

This sacred text, while one of the most recent of the Books of Coffee, is considered to be the most influential on the faith itself. The place described could be any one of literally thousands of privately owned, out-of-the-way coffee shops. What the faithful must ask themselves is this; Did a coffee shop inspire the Book of Suggestions, or can this sacred Book be seen in every coffee shop you go into?

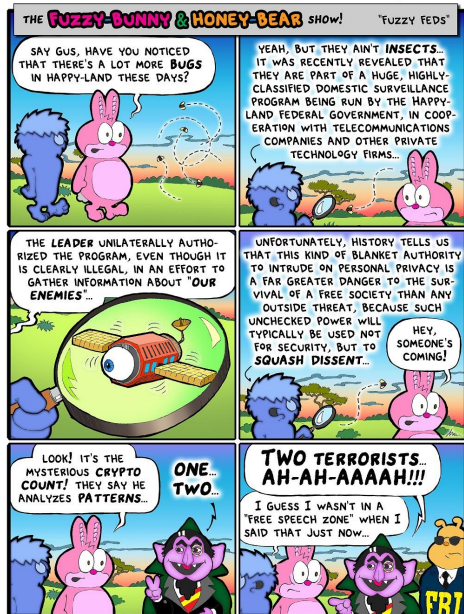
And the Lord spake saying, “Lo, thou shalt open unto me a temple of Coffee, wherein shall ye find bagels and scones, and all manner of delicious bounty, both sweet and savory. And those who serve in this temple shall give unto thee beverages of great virtue and potency, yea, though they be but infusions of roasted subtropical berries and oriental leaves. For those who serve are wise in the ways of Coffee, and ye shall know them by the aprons they

wear, black that if they spillith, the stain showeth not.

And within the temple of Coffee, ye shall find comfortable furniture and low tables where ye might find rest, and worry not at the scratches and rips. Mark ye not that the chairs and couches are all different, and matcheth not. Note ye never thy ceramic mug in which those who serve bring ye thy sacred Coffee, though it be chipped and cracked, and have a humorous text on the side. For all of these things are signs unto you, and thou shall know thyself to be in my sight, and thy Coffee is pleasing unto me.

And those who have seen the truth and light of the Coffee shall come unto this place, and know peace, and ye shall find books and chess sets, and other distractions and pleasures of the mind. And forget ye not thy paper and pencil, for the poet shall know of the inspiration through Coffee in this sacred place, yea, and the musician and comic book artist too shall know the music to flow in their head, and the funny little people practically draw themselves.

For in my temple of Coffee, ye shall find rest and sanctuary from the maelstrom of the outside world, and those of my followers who meet ye there shall know ye, by the Coffee you do drink. And ye shall know them, and in the Brotherhood of Coffee will ye find common ground with thy fellow man, and know peace and contentment all the days of thy life.



# The Story of Inkwell by Brianne Fidgety

Once upon a time, there was a girl named Inkwell, mostly because her parents were hippies who read a lot of Keats. Inkwell didn't like them very much because they were always telling her to "chill out", whatever that meant. Also, they smoked a lot of reefer and listened to old, crackling Grateful Dead records.

Inkwell wasn't too fond of herself, either. People perpetually called her "Inky Dinky Doo," and she hated that. Also, Inkwell spent a good deal of time by herself because everyone thought she was too snooty and uptight. This took a toll on her self-esteem, and one day she decided to become a hermit. Since she didn't have anywhere else to go, Inkwell locked herself in her parents' cottage and danced around endlessly to Nena's "99 Red Balloons", only stopping to eat gummy bear casserole. Inkwell never slept.

One day, a traveling umbrella salesman knocked on Inkwell's door. Her parents had left months ago to follow a Jethro Tull cover band around the country, so it was up to her to get rid of him.

"I'm Tecumseh McTermite!" he said.

"Shoo! Go away!" she greeted him.

"I got all the latest models of fashionable umbrellas!" he persisted. "Take the RL47, for instance. Why, with this umbrella, you'll be the talk of the town!" With an overly enthusiastic zeal,

Tecumseh opened an umbrella to show it off. One of the spokes caught Inkwell in the left eye.

"Ouch! I'm blinded and deformed!" she wailed.

Tecumseh felt kind of bad about this, so he asked Inkwell to marry him. Her horoscope for that particular day had mentioned something about accepting any and all proposals or suffering the consequences of being eaten alive by a hoard of centipedes. Begrudgingly, she said yes, and Tecumseh whisked her away to Reno, where they were joined together in the cheesiest ceremony known to man.

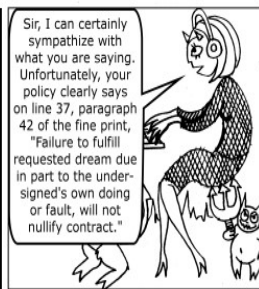
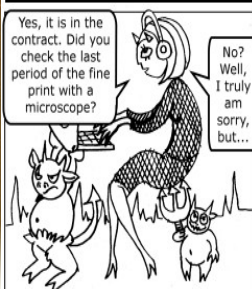
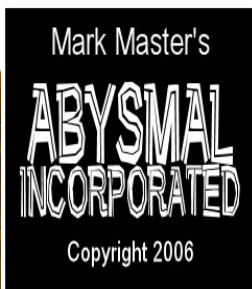
It turns out that Tecumseh was really a Communist who was trying to reanimate the embalmed corpse of Vladimir Lenin. The

marriage had been a ruse to collect the insurance money so he could further his cause! When Inkwell wasn't looking, he sprayed an entire can of Pledge dusting solution onto her sherbet after dinner one night.

"Oh, sherbet! My favourite!" Inkwell exclaimed. She promptly died.

The end.

## Warm Self Portrait by Justin Weber



# C o n t r i b u t o r s

**Ariel Lee** is a student in Portland, OR. She writes the zine, "Windows Down" & always loves getting e-mail. She aspires to be a great writer, or a accordion playing street performer. Contact:

[oneinmyraincoat@gmail.com](mailto:oneinmyraincoat@gmail.com)

**Mardou** and **Fortenski** sometimes make comics together. Fortenski's too shy for a website. See Mardou's stuff at [Mardouville.com](http://Mardouville.com).

**Sarah Morean** works in a library. She reads and writes lots of comics, knits, sews, writes fiction and songs, cracks jokes, and begins grad school for Library Science this fall. [www.smorean.com](http://www.smorean.com).

**Quinn Collard** is an English major at Smith College who enjoys puppies, Conan O'Brien, and coffee. Info on her zine and other excitement can be found at [museumofidiots.com](http://museumofidiots.com).

**Brett Yates** lives in NJ, where he spends his time reading, writing, and watching movies. He can be reached at [brettayates@gmail.com](mailto:brettayates@gmail.com) or, often, at the Spotswood Diner.

**Laura Cushing** yet lives.

**Rick Silva** grew up in Boston, MA, attended Cornell University, and teaches high school chemistry on Cape Cod, where he lives with his wife and two cats. He co-writes the comic *Zephyr & Reginald: Minions for Hire*, publishes a zine, *Caravan*, and writes a comic book review column for Comicwidows.com.

**Gynn Stella** is originally from NH. She received her degree from MA College of Art, majoring in film making. She lives and works on Cape Cod with her husband, Rick Silva. She does all of the artwork for the comic *Zephyr & Reginald: Minions for Hire*. She is involved in animal rescue, and has adopted two cats with special needs. [Contact Rick & Gynn at www.dandelionstudios.com](mailto:Contact Rick & Gynn at www.dandelionstudios.com).

**Matt Eichler** is from Foley, MN & former high school agriculture and natural resources teacher He's completing a Ph.D. in Adult Education at U of MN and is a Master of Divinity student at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. He is an avid reader, writer, passenger train traveler, queer activist, gardener, & volunteer youth worker. He publishes *The Transitory Progression*. Contact Matt at [discojam@comcast.net](mailto:discojam@comcast.net).

**Justin Weber** is a native of Sauk Rapids, MN. His main influences are the classic cartoons from the 1930's and 40's. His primary focus has been drawing; he has also ventured into painting and printmaking. View a flash animated music video he created, "The Contemptuous Heart", at [www.westnilemusic.com](http://www.westnilemusic.com). He can be reached at [JLW11Hi@yahoo.com](mailto:JLW11Hi@yahoo.com).

**Dangerous Lee** is a syndicated columnist and a sassy and sexy single mom from MI with an opinion on everything and a way with words that shocks and entertains. Her column appears in The Uncommon Sense, Defunkt magazine, Consciousness Magazine, Tint Magazine, MasterJay.com, and is gaining interest with other publications! Email her at [askdangerouslee@hotmail.com](mailto:askdangerouslee@hotmail.com)

**Loki W. Kaspari** is a writer and comic artist whose goal is to leave his honest job to write and draw full time, just like other writers and artists.

His work includes *Ace and Bog*, a strip about a pair of working-class assassins.



## Liquor and Wine at the VFW by Misty O'Brien

**Misty O'Brien** is a multi-disciplinary artist living in St. Cloud, MN with her husband, John. Interests include painting, music, reading, publishing, and crocheting. Besides this zine, she has websites at [passiongroove.net](http://passiongroove.net) and [bravegirlstudio.net](http://bravegirlstudio.net), works on art, and works part time in retail and in various capacities for VAS Littlecrow.

**John O'Brien** is a writer living in St. Cloud, MN with his wife, Misty. He has written several chapbooks of poetry in his life, with *boys + girls* being the most recent. When he's not working in the food service industry, his interests include horror movies, vampires, music, reading, & D&D.

**Vanesa Littlecrow W** is a self-trained multi-disciplinary artist and businesswoman. Originally from Puerto Rico, she is the owner of Rice Print Shop in Rice, MN, and author of *Polska, Sucka!* and the *Nine Lives of Catnose*. She lives in a dome in the forest with her husband and two cats.

**Mark Masters** owns too many books and name tags, and too little common sense. Hailing from the vast urban sprawl that is Fargo ND, he works as a corporate wage slave, where his mind wanders while his mouth issues forth power words and false sentiments.

**One Neck Hates You** is Edinburgh based cartoonist & illustrator Iain Laurie. He has contributed drawings and illustrations to a number of small press titles and magazines globally. He spends his free time watching "Miami Vice" re-runs and solving crimes with a supernatural element.

**Steve Green** is a former newspaper reporter, & a founding editor of *Critical Wave: the European Science Fiction and Fantasy Review* (1988-97). He is VP of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association and admin of the Delta Film Award and the Nova Awards for excellence in British and Irish fanzines.

**Ben Smith** is a former law student who has opted for the glamorous and exciting world of alternative political cartooning. For all kinds of goodies, including the blog, the archive, and a new cartoon every Monday, visit [www.fightingwordcomics.com!](http://www.fightingwordcomics.com!)

**Brianne Fidgety** has put her assumed banshee blood to good use; she

once fronted both a punk band and the collective gaggle of noise known as Spazbot. She can be found writing, crocheting, reading Kafka and Vonnegut, antagonizing any form of human life with which she comes in contact, or zapping people with radiation.

**Jonathan Baylis** has been working in and around comics for 10+ years, including intern at Marvel and Valiant/Acclaim, and an editor at Topps Comics. He published his first comic story in the NYC publication, "Free Comics NYC". He works as a writer-producer in the cable TV industry.

**T.J. Kirsch** was raised near Albany, NY, and studied illustration and cartooning at Savannah College of Art and Design and the Joe Kubert School of Cartoon and Graphic Art and works for Archie Comic Publications as a penciller/colorist and as a freelance illustrator/web cartoonist.

**David Beyer Jr** used to watch Sesame Street while eating mac and cheese with little pieces of hot dogs in it, and not much has changed since then. He is a smelly punk that lives in a southeastern WI town. Check out more of his work at <http://dascejr.livejournal.com>



**Hallway by Misty O'Brien**

**Submission info:** Send submissions to [misty@bravegirlstudio.net](mailto:misty@bravegirlstudio.net) with "ITAK" as the subject line. Issues are quarterly (Jan, Apr, Jul & Oct).

Payment is 1 copy. Visit [bravegirlstudio.net](http://bravegirlstudio.net) for guidelines.

**Ordering info:** For a copy of *It Takes All Kinds*, send your legibly written address with \$3.00 concealed cash or 4 stamps to: **ITAK c/o Misty O'Brien**, PO Box 5052, St. Cloud, MN 56302. Or, send \$3.50 thru PayPal to [misty@bravegirlstudio.net](mailto:misty@bravegirlstudio.net). **International orders add one stamp or \$1.50 per issue.**

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## **Pyre.**

By John O'Brien

Match  
between finger, finger, thumb.

Grip  
lax to pinch as head closer to surface.

A matter of pressure and friction.

Stars are born in such a fashion,  
gas excited into heat to light.

I've got your seven days right here, God.

I've got your seven days going nowhere  
fast.

You're cold and waiting.

Match  
between finger, finger, thumb.

Grip  
tight and ignorant of burning.

I'm sitting on the fence  
waiting for a stiff wind  
giddy off the fumes of halfway.

I've got your closure right here.

I've got your closure  
between blistering fingers.

You're warm to hot  
to bright.

For five minutes you're  
a star.

I bet they can see you from space.